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TAGS: UNGA PHUM CU LH
SUBJECT: LITHUANIA CONSIDERS HOW TO HELP WITH THE CUBAN
HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

REF: STATE 147620

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN CLOUD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) We delivered reftel points to Head of the America's Division of the MFA, Lina Gubreviciute, on October 24. Gubreviciute told us that although Cuba is not a high-profile issue for Lithuania the MFA might be interested in cooperating on one or more of the projects in reftel. She said that the GOL would like to see what the EU response is to this demarche before cooperating either within the EU or bilaterally on some projects. Gubreviciute promised to respond to us with possible areas of cooperation once they are identified.

¶2. (U) Lithuania is the only country in the EU that does not have diplomatic relations with Cuba. On October 18 the International Republican Institute (IRI) and Vilnius University hosted a Baltic Working Forum on Cuba. The forum clearly raised the profile of the human rights situation in Cuba for the GOL and ordinary Lithuanians. The event was attended by well known Parliamentarians such as Estonian MP Mart Laar, as well as experts and exiled Cuban dissidents. Though some in attendance questioned the value of the U.S. embargo, everyone recognized the suffering caused by the current regime and more than one Lithuanian MP publicly said that this was not the time to open relations with Cuba.
CLOUD